



The Newsletter of E.J. Peiker - Nature and Travel Photography

Summer 2021 - Vol. 20, Issue 3
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Welcome to the 20th year of the newsletter from E.J. Peiker, Nature & Travel Photography and www.EJPhoto.com. In this quarterly publication, I share with fellow photographers my photographic experiences, photo equipment reviews, photography tips, processing tips, and industry news. I also inform subscribers about upcoming workshops and products that I offer. All content is copyrighted by E.J. Peiker and may not be reproduced but it is permitted to forward this newsletter in its entirety only. If you would like to be added to the mailing list, unsubscribe, or access back issues, please visit: <http://www.ejphoto.com/newsletter.htm>



North Dakota (a7R III, 24-70mm)

Why can't I get my _____ that I ordered 3 months ago?

This newsletter is nothing like what I had planned. I have written a huge review of a brand new innovative product including a detailed comparison to some competitive products. The product was originally scheduled to be introduced to the market in April, then May, then June, and now I can't get the company to tell me when it will be introduced.

Have you tried to buy a new camera model like the Sony a1 that came to market almost 6 months ago? Unless you pre-ordered it before it even came to market or lucked into one, it is likely you haven't received it and there's a good chance you won't receive it in the foreseeable future. A factory refurb recently became available at Amazon and sold for \$500 MORE than list price for a new one. Similarly, the exciting Sony 14mm f/1.8 was supposed to be available in May, it was not and there is no firm release date. I had plans to do a comprehensive test of this camera with the new 14mm f/1.8 lens for astro photography for this newsletter, but neither product is available and may not be for some time.



Have you had difficulty renting a car because the rental car companies don't have cars available despite travel being a small fraction of what it used to be? Maybe you got to your destination and the rental car reservation you had could not be filled. Or maybe you have wanted to buy a new car but the model you wanted or the options you wanted weren't sitting on the dealer lot. In the past a car order for something that had to be built would take between 6 weeks and 12 weeks – now they may not even take that order or if they do it could be six months or even a year, in some cases for new high demand vehicles, two years.

I have tried buying two different high end bicycles from two different prominent bike manufacturers – one for my significant other, the other for myself. One was ordered in August of 2020 and I received a delivery date of April 2021 for this 2020 model. April came and went and then the manufacturer just cancelled the order stating that they simply cannot guarantee that it will ever be delivered. The other, a 2021 ultra-high end endurance road race bike. I was initially told June 2022 and then a few weeks later that I might be able to get it at the end of 2023 for this 2021 model. One of my bikes needed a new chain; I ordered it in February and was given a delivery date of December 2021 – for a chain! A new hub or new wheels are being quoted at more than a year. Even more insane is that all of the bike companies are now introducing 2022 models even though they never delivered the 2020 and 2021 models but they won't take orders for them. The supply chain for bikes is not supposed to be "normal" until 2024.

My built-in refrigerator is struggling with multiple breakdowns and is out of production. I have already had to replace a temperature control board and had to buy a used one off of eBay for \$700. Parts for the ice-maker are completely unavailable. There are several in-built fridge standard sizes and the appliance centers generally don't stock them all or any relying on special orders that in the past took about a week. When I tried to buy a new in-built fridge in the size for my house, they wouldn't even take my order because the only thing that is currently being made are stand-alone models, and even those can be hard to get if you want a specific model, due to lack of electronic parts to manufacture them with. Similarly I had a component on my pool fail. My pool repair service could not get the part from their suppliers and finally my pool guy went online and got one at triple the normal cost on eBay.

A high end nVidia graphics card is completely unobtainium. GE Force 3xxx are completely out of stock – some places will let you order one at \$200 above list price with no estimated delivery date. Used and discontinued 1xxx and 2xxx cards may cost you significantly more than they cost new.

What do all of these things have in common? They have tech components made in Asia or other parts of the world in factories that have and continue to face shut-downs, material shortages and labor shortages due to the pandemic. Initially, when the pandemic first began in early 2020, these types of items weren't that tough to get because the supply chain had inventory. As the inventory got burned off, factories that make components that go into the products either themselves had to shut-down for health and safety reasons or had to shut down because they couldn't get materials required to make these components.

Cameras, cars, appliances, bikes and just about anything else that utilizes technology in some way could not be completed in their respective assembly plants due to lack of components and those components became unavailable due to things like chemical, hardware, etc not being available. Rental cars for your photo trips aren't available because the rental car companies sold off their inventory expecting to replace it once the pandemic eased but now can't get the cars. They can't get the cars, or you can't buy the exact car you want, because some component, often an electronic component like an engine controller is not available since the factory in Taiwan that makes those ran out of the chemicals to produce those chips.

This is a story of a worldwide supply chain in crisis. A semiconductor company like Sony electronics that makes sensors, or Samsung, or TSMC can't supply the electronic components because their suppliers can't supply the components, and the component manufacturers can't make the components because their chemical and material suppliers can't make or extract those and then, even if they can, they can't secure the shipping containers. Additionally, all of them have serious labor shortages, shut-downs and other problems related to the pandemic.



What can we do? Enjoy the items that we have, hope that you don't have any critical failures, use your things longer than you anticipated, exercise patience, and be prepared to pay much higher prices than in the past – the law of supply and demand still holds. If there is demand but too little supply, prices go up, if you can get it at all...

The review that I had planned for this new product that I really like is in the can, but the can can't be opened – maybe the Autumn newsletter is already written... I hope so!

Huge Gear Sale Continues

Thank you to the great response to my gear sale. I have sold a lot of high quality items in the last quarter including some essentially new stuff. Since the last newsletter I have added some more items. The flawless Sony a7R III - 42 megapixel camera with L-bracket is still available as is the ultra wide Irix 11mm f/4 lens for Nikon F-mount, many filters and camera support items. All sales are within the USA to USA addresses only. Prices include ground shipping and I am not charging extra to cover PayPal fees – the price you see is what you pay, no hidden fees. See the full and up to date listing here:

https://ejphoto.com/gear_for_sale_page.htm

Influential Photographers During My Life as a Photographer

Over the decades there have been a number of prominent photographers that have really influenced what I shoot, how I shoot and in some cases even the equipment I shoot with. Interestingly, as the years and decades rolled on, I have gotten to know almost all of them personally and can call some of them long-time friends.

The first really influential photographer on me was John Shaw. John, who is a friend now, published a series of Amphoto books back in the 1980's and 1990's that I soaked up and read several times. These included, among others, The Nature Photographer's Complete Guide to Professional Field Techniques, Close-ups in Nature, and The Nature Photography Field Guide. Back in those days I found myself on flights between Albuquerque and Portland, Oregon several times per month and when I wasn't working on some paper, or expense report, or trying to figure out some technical issue during those Western Airlines and later



Delta Airlines and America West flights, I was reading John's books. In the late 90's I finally met John in one of his "Business of Nature Photography seminars in Tucson. I have since traveled with him several times and spent the better part of a month on various ships in Arctic and Antarctic waters. I really modeled my photography after John's in those days. Not only were his photos beautiful, they really covered the same type of subject matter that I most loved – namely landscapes and wildlife. Much of what I do today is still heavily influenced by what I learned from John Shaw's work back then. The photo on the right was taken in Greenland while standing right next to John and in all fairness, he found this scene.

As we moved into the late 1990's I was browsing photo books at a local Barnes and Noble, or maybe it was the defunct Bookstar, and ran across Arthur Morris' The Art of Bird Photography. The images in the book were stunning and the book was a complete how-to in bird photography. I wanted to learn how to do this type of photography and attended a couple of workshops with Artie. I learned what differentiates a snap-shot of a bird from an excellent bird photograph. We got to know each other fairly well in the early 2000's and even though we have largely fallen out of contact over the last 10 years or so, he is a person that I consider a great influence who spurred a new direction in my photography around - the direction of artistic bird



photography. The accompanying photo was taken on the first photo workshop I ever attended – one with Artie Morris. Diving into bird photography led me to meeting many other notable bird photographers including Greg Downing, whom I helped start Naturescapes.net, a site that I am still involved with today.

Sometime around 2005, through my association with NatureScapes and bird photography in general, I became aware of Alan Murphy. Alan was doing some ground breaking stuff in the bird photography arena and continues to do so to this day. Alan and I have become great friends, have shot together many times, and talk on the phone regularly. His work is absolutely next level and beyond anyone's in the bird photography world. To say that his work has been influential to me and thousands of other photographers would be an understatement. There is simply no one better. The photo to the right is a White-eyed Vireo that Alan and I photographed on a trip he and I took through the Texas Rio Grande Valley.



After a period of doing almost nothing except bird photography between 2000 and 2007, I started seeing more and more work from Canadian photographer Darwin Wiggett . He specialized in the Canadian Rockies and his stuff was just jaw dropping to me – his use of color was the best I had seen up to that point. I contacted Darwin and we started a bit of an email dialog and he gave me some tips of places to visit in the Canadian Rockies. This re-jump-started my landscape photography in a big way. Unfortunately, Darwin has left the photography world and he has moved on to other endeavors but I still consider him to be a great influence on my landscape photography and one of the very best landscape photographers of the early 21st century. I first saw a photo of this beautiful mountain in Jasper National Park when Darwin posted a photo of it online.



While Darwin really got me into the grand landscapes, my friends Guy Tal and Alister Benn have influenced me greatly in looking beyond the grand landscape. Their exceptional work often focuses on the smaller intimate landscapes within the larger landscape. Nobody does this better than these two. I love them both as photographers, as philosophers and as people and can't wait to shoot with them again in the future. The photo below and to the left was taken while walking around a large crater in Death Valley National Park while having a philosophical discussion about the world as a whole with Guy Tal.



The photo below on the right is a small detail I found in the rocks in Asturias, Spain while conversing and having many guttural laughs with Alister Benn



The last of the “great” influencers in my photography is Australia’s Tony Hewitt. As many of you know, I love aerial photography and have written several articles about it including in magazines. Nobody, I repeat nobody, is a more skilled aerial photographer than Tony Hewitt. His work, in my opinion, is so far beyond anything else out there that it isn’t even close. I am so fortunate to have been able to share a helicopter with Tony on two occasions in Western Australia. If there is one type of photography that I wish I could do 100 times as much as I do, it is no-doors helicopter photography and nobody has influenced me more than Tony in this regard. I took my award winning photo to the right in Western Australia with Tony.



Of course there are many, many other photographers that have influenced me and I have become friends with so many insanely talented photographers all around the world.

Please check-out the works of these truly outstanding photographers and be prepared to be amazed:

John Shaw - <https://www.johnshawphoto.com/>

Arthur Morris - <http://www.birdsasart-blog.com/fine-art-prints/>

Alan Murphy - <https://www.alanmurphyphotography.com/>

Darwin Wiggett – go to Google and type in Darwin Wiggett photos and then click on images

Guy Tal - <https://guytal.com/>

Alister Benn - <https://expressive.photography/>

Tony Hewitt - <https://www.tonyhewitt.com/>

The Story Behind The Photo



One of my favorite photographs from my many trips to Iceland over the years is the one I call “Deep Inside Bruarfoss”. This photo was taken on my only solo trip to Iceland. All of my other more than a dozen trips were either with a group or as the leader of a group or individual guide. When I went to Greenland in late August 2019, I had to first fly to Iceland in order to get on the plane to the eastern fjords of Greenland. I took this as an opportunity to explore parts of Iceland that I could not previously with often elderly groups and individuals. One of these is Bruarfoss which requires about a 5 mile round-trip hike which can get a bit muddy in places. I decided to arrive at the trailhead at 3:00AM to be sure I got there well before sunrise. This was also the best opportunity to be there by myself or at most with no more than a couple of other people since it can get a bit busy later in the day. I arrived in the parking lot and I was the only car; the weather was good - not at all a guarantee in Iceland. The hike in the semi-dark took about an hour and on the way I passed several other smaller waterfalls that I would photograph

on the way out. I had the place to myself until well after sunrise and was overjoyed – it is one of my best photographic memories – a comfortably cool and totally windless morning with early fall color and an absolutely beautiful waterfall with a foot bridge that you can get a really nice overview shot (on the right)

This waterfall is fed by glacial water and as such has a lot of glacial silt in it which gives it a beautiful light blue “glow”. After taking numerous photos from the bridge of the whole waterfall complex as well as isolating parts of it with my 100-400mm lens, I worked my way down to the small peninsula that you see just right of center with cascades on both sides in the overview photograph. The view from here was incredible and totally immersive. I again used the 100-400mm lens to create this month’s “Story Behind the Photo” image. Due to the focal length and shutter speed that I wanted, I had to focus stack the shot so the final image consists of five photos starting at the front outcropping and then stepping back to the farthest points of the photo. It was shot with the Sony a7R 3 at 135mm and each frame was shot at f/5.6 for 2.5 seconds.



The Best Lenses for Your Nikon, Canon and Sony Mirrorless Cameras

The table of best lenses for your camera is a living document that gets updated every quarter. Changes from previous tables can be seen in **bold** but there are no changes this time because none of the new lenses that would likely make this list are actually available. As development of DSLR lenses for Nikon and Canon have essentially stopped, I am switching this section to covering mirrorless only. On all systems, areas left blank means that there is no lens currently available (or there isn’t one that I can recommend – e.g. the Canon 600/800mm f/11 lenses) with that native mount; however, in virtually all cases, a DSLR lens can be adapted to the mirrorless system often with some minor to moderate compromises, primarily in autofocus capability. Currently there are no electronically coupled third party lenses for the Canon and Nikon mirrorless systems due to both manufacturers using a proprietary mount strategy. For my final DSLR lens recommendations for Canon and Nikon, please see the Autumn 2020 Newsletter linked here: <https://ejphoto.com/Quack%20PDF/Quack%20Autumn%202020.pdf>

| Lens Category | Canon RF Mount | Nikon Z Mount | Sony (F)E Mount |
|----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Full-frame Fisheye | | | Sony 28mm f/2 + 16mm Fisheye Conversion Lens |
| Hyper Wide Prime | | | Sigma 14mm f/1.8 Art |
| Ultra Wide Prime | | Nikkor Z 20mm f/1.8S | Zeiss Batis 18mm f/2.8 Voigtländer 15mm f/4.5 |
| Extra Wide Prime | | Nikkor Z 24mm f/1.8S | Sony 20mm f/1.8 G Zeiss Loxia 21mm f/2.8 |
| Standard Wide Prime | | | Sony 24mm f/1.4 GM Sigma 24mm f/1.4 Art |
| Moderate Wide Prime | | Nikkor Z 35mm f/1.8S | Sigma 35mm f/1.2 Art Sony-Zeiss 35mm f/1.4 |
| Standard Prime | Canon RF 50mm f/1.2L Canon RF 50mm f/1.8 | Nikkor Z 50mm f/1.2S Nikkor Z 50mm f/1.8S | Sony 50mm f/1.2 GM Sony-Zeiss 55mm f/1.8 |
| Portrait Prime (short telephoto) | Canon RF 85mm f/1.2L Canon RF 85mm f/2 Macro IS | Nikkor Z 85mm f/1.8S | Sigma 85mm f/1.4 DG DN Sigma 105mm f/1.4 Art Sony 85mm f/1.4 GM |
| Medium Telephoto Prime | | | Sigma 135mm f/1.8 Art Sony 135mm f/1.8 GM Zeiss Batis 135mm f/2.8 |
| 200mm Prime | | | |
| 300mm Prime | | | |
| 400mm Prime | | | Sony 400mm f/2.8 GM |
| 500mm Prime | | | |
| 600mm Prime | | | Sony 600mm f/4 GM |
| 800mm Prime | | | |
| Wide Angle Zoom | Canon RF 15-35mm f/2.8L | Nikkor Z 14-24mm f/2.8S Nikkor Z 14-30mm f/4S | Sony 16-35mm f/2.8 GM Sony 12-24mm f/2.8 GM Sigma 14-24 f/2.8 Art Tamron 17-28 f/2.8 Di |
| Standard Zoom | Canon 28-70mm f/2L Canon 24-80 f/2.8L Canon RF 24-105mm f/4L IS | Nikkor Z 24-70 f/2.8S Nikkor Z 24-70 f/4S | Sigma 24-70 f/2.8 Art Sony 24-70 f/2.8 GM Tamron 25-75mm f/2.8 |
| Telephoto Zoom | Canon RF 70-200 f/2.8L IS | Nikkor Z 70-200mm f/2.8 VR | Tamron 70-180mm f/2.8 Sony 70-200 f/2.8 GM |
| Super Telephoto Zoom | Canon RF 100-500mm f/4.5-7.1 | | Sony 100-400 f/4.5-5.6 GM Sony 200-600 f/5.6-6.3 G |
| Macro | Canon RF 85mm f/2 Macro (0.5:1x) | | Sigma 105mm f/2.8 Macro Art Sony 90mm f/2.8 Macro Voigtlander 110mm f/2.5 |

Photo Gear Garage Sale

All items that are currently available for sale are listed on my website. Here's the direct link to all of the gear I am currently selling – it is kept up to date: https://ejphoto.com/gear_for_sale_page.htm

Workshops

I currently have no group workshops planned. Private instruction in camera operation, landscape and wildlife photography is available as well as image processing training in Capture One, Topaz, Nik, and Photoshop. Photo workstation consulting services are available. These services are currently only available via telephone or video conference. Contact me at ejpeiker@cox.net for more information.

Facebook and Instagram Pages

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/ejpeiker/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/EJPeikerNaturePhotographer>

Newsletter Info

This is the 20th year of my quarterly Newsletter. I try to cover the wide array of digital imaging and products from mirrorless to medium format and everything in between. Throughout the years, the information contained herein has always been free and will continue to be free despite the many hours it takes to put it together and significant equipment and travel expenses. Most of the products that I have tested and reviewed, I have purchased myself. A small minority have been made available to me for review and evaluation by loyal readers and a few by the manufacturers themselves. While the newsletter is free either via eMail subscription or via accessing it on my website at <http://www.ejphoto.com/newsletter.htm>, if you find the information useful to you and you do wish to donate for my continuing efforts, you may do so via PayPal and sending the funds to ejpeiker@cox.net.

Disclaimers

E.J. Peiker conducts consulting services and product design services for a number of photographic product companies. Those that know me know that I would not endorse a product, even for compensation, if I did not feel it were a superior product.

E.J. Peiker is a co-founder of www.Naturescapes.net and leads photographic workshops under the **NatureScapes** Certified Workshops banner.

E.J. Peiker is a member of **Nikon** Professional Services and receives some services at a substantial discount or free of charge from Nikon USA. www.nikonpro.com

E.J. Peiker is a **Sony** Digital Imaging Pro and receives some services at a reduced cost or free of charge from Sony USA. <https://alphauniverse.com/prosupport/>

E.J. Peiker promotes **LensCoat** products and receives some of their products at no cost. www.lenscoat.com

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